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The Love of an Uncrowned Queen (Sophie Dorothea, consort of George I., and her correspondence with Philip Christopher Count Königsmarck, now first published from the originals). By W. H. WILKINS, M.A. (Chicago and New York: Herbert S. Stone and Co. 1901. Pp. x, 578.)

THE author deals with a mystery that has aroused interest in each successive generation since 1694 and that the smooth narrative before us would appear to have solved—if only the author's statements could be believed. But there are serious charges to be brought against Mr. Wilkins's book in spite of the fact that it shows much labor and ingenuity, that the author is a fellow of the Royal Historical Society, and that he claims to have brought forward new and conclusive evidence. Firstly the use of the literature has been incomplete and the most important work that has yet appeared, Horric de Beaucaire's *Mésalliance dans la Maison de Brunswick* (Paris 1884), has been overlooked, as have also the publications from the Prussian archives containing letters to and from the Electress Sophia. Secondly the use of authorities has been uncritical to the last degree; for instance among the works cited are Köcher's essays on the *Prinzessin von Ahlden* which appeared in the *Historische Zeitschrift*, Vol. 48. Now if there is one episode on which Köcher has dwelt with peculiar emphasis it is that of the supposed visit of the Electress Sophia to the court of Celle to ask for the hand of Sophie Dorothea for the Electoral Prince. Köcher shows that the whole incident is a figment of the imagination of Duke Anthony Ulrich of Wolfenbüttel whose choice of the doings at Hanover for the theme of the sixth volume of his novel, *Die Römische Octavia*, is responsible for the erroneous views of later historians. Without an attempt to refute Köcher, Wilkins adopts the whole dramatic narrative of the visit; in another connection, and also without giving his reasons, he calls Anthony Ulrich's romance "a fairly true version of the princess's story" while acknowledging that its form tells against accuracy. As a matter of fact letters of Anthony Ulrich published by Beaucaire in the appendix of his work show that, at the time at least of the arrest of the princess and the disappearance of Königsmarck, the duke was kept as much in the dark as was the rest of the wondering world.

The bulk of Wilkins's book is made up of a supposed correspondence between Königsmarck and Sophie Dorothea; the letters are preserved in the University of Lund and their ownership can be traced back through several generations to a relative of Count Königsmarck. Schaumann, the first critical writer on this whole subject, and Köcher, who has published all the available material from the Hanoverian archives, as well as Horric de Beaucaire, condemn the correspondence as utterly spurious; Wilkins disposes of Schaumann and Köcher by the simple declaration that they have never seen the originals—but Beaucaire has seen them and is as unhesitating as the other two. He has compared the handwriting with that of genuine letters of the two persons concerned and finds no

resemblance. And indeed had these letters ever actually passed between a nobleman and the wife of the Prince in whose army he was serving, what in the world would have induced the guilty pair to preserve them, to deposit them, as Wilkins surmises, "at stated periods, probably at the end of every six months," in the hands of the infamous Aurora Königs-marck? They are of no importance to history save as proving that the connection of the two was highly improper. Would a princess be likely to hand over to a third party letters to herself so indecent that Wilkins has had to expurgate them?

The strongest point brought forward by Wilkins is that the despatches of Sir William Dutton Colt, British envoy from 1689 to 1693, now produced for the first time, corroborate the correspondence in certain ways: "if it can be proved," he writes, "by independent testimony and 'undesigned coincidences' (as Paley would say) that the mention of persons are accurate and the allusions to even minute events correct in every detail, it affords the strongest possible proof of the genuineness and authenticity of the letters." But the "minute events" as given in Wilkins's extracts from Colt prove to be almost wholly the coming of this or that person to this or that place at such and such a time. Now mark what a powerful weapon is placed in the hands of an editor who would like to have these two accounts agree. Wilkins says himself that throughout the correspondence an elaborate cypher *or rather series of cyphers* has been used for the names of persons and places and that the task of unravelling has been so difficult he must ask for indulgence if errors have crept in—furthermore that only four out of 200 letters are dated and that he has been obliged to sort them so as "to allow them to answer one another in due order." With such power over names and dates almost any two texts could be made to conform!

Perhaps the caliber of Wilkins's book can best be judged from the following passages occurring in a chapter on the "History and Authenticity of the Letters," which as a note implies can be skipped by the ordinary reader as it "does not affect the narrative": "Two centuries have gone; the lovers are dead; the hands that penned these burning words, the eyes that wept, the hearts that throbbed as they were written have crumbled into dust. But their witness is here—here in these old and faded pages, which breathe even now, faint as the scent of dead rose leaves, the perfume of their passion."

ERNEST F. HENDERSON.

L'Œuvre Sociale de la Révolution Française. Introduction par M. ÉMILE FAGUET. (Paris: Librairie A. Fontemoing. Pp. 460.)

THIS volume of essays upon the social changes brought about by the French Revolution should contribute not a little towards a better appreciation of the great non-political revolution which is so commonly obscured by the dramatic political history of the time. It is not always made clear that the deep and permanent change which trans-